

Section 1 Recruiting

These recommendations resulted from the NWSS, Phase 2. Many of these recommendations are predicated on NWSS research and analysis that identified core competencies—knowledge, skills, attitudes and abilities (KSAA's)—that are needed to be a successful recruiter. Others stem from systemic or environmental obstacles in achieving desired recruiting outcomes. These core competencies, combined with an analysis of the current selection process and job incentives, provided the basis for a coordinated set of recommendations to assist the Service in attracting and selecting the best-qualified people for the job of recruiter. The findings and recommendations are organized into the following subsections: Recruiter Selection and Development, Recruiting Organization and Structure, Recruiting Support/Tools, Marketing Programs and Incentives, and Removing Barriers.

1.a. Recruiter Selection and Development

1.a.1. New Resident-Based Recruiter Training Curriculum: Identification of recruiter core competencies revealed gaps in the current process of training and qualifying recruiters. With the assistance of the Recruiter School Chief and several experienced recruiters, the NWSS team developed new resident-training terminal performance objectives (TPO's) to target recruiter needs. Two significant areas of improvement involve sales/marketing and setting realistic expectations. The value of sales/marketing is obvious, and setting realistic expectations is an essential factor in creating motivation. Having an accurate picture of CG life is a crucial part of recruit/nonrate motivation; this must be coupled with an expectation to succeed and a belief in the value thereof. Thus, recruiters must set accurate and relevant expectations early for prospects. This will require a shift in recruiter training from the present emphasis on a recruit's experience in Recruit Training (first 8wks) to a focus on his/her career (4+yrs). The Recruiter C-School curriculum should be redesigned to incorporate all new resident-based TPO's.

1.a.2. New PQS for Recruiters: Recruiters should be provided with on-the-job PQS based on non-resident TPO's derived from recruiter core competencies. The KSAA's that are not covered by the resident-based training course will be covered in this new PQS. Recruiter PQS will be provided to the Recruiter after attending resident based training and should be completed within six months of arrival at the recruiting office.

1.a.3. Remove Assignment Barriers: Motivation and incentive barriers must be minimized to attract the best candidates to this profoundly influential job. In addition to the following recommendations, the Enlisted Advancement Study Team (EAST) should investigate ways to eliminate harmful effects on advancement from this out-of-specialty assignment:

- 1.a.3.a) Assignment preference for follow-on assignment,
- 1.a.3.b) Academic credit for Recruiter C-School,
- 1.a.3.c) SDAP at least on a par with other Services,

1.a.3.d) Allowances for uniform/dry cleaning/haircuts

1.a.4. Screening of Recruiter Candidates: Aptitude interviews (such as those developed by the Gallup Organization) should be used in screening candidates for the job. Attitudinal/psychological instruments should be used to filter out candidates unsuited to sales and marketing work.

1.b. Recruiting Organization and Structure

1.b.1. Relocate Recruiting Offices: Many recruiting offices are not located where they can achieve best results. Recruiting offices should be relocated to areas based on such factors as high population density, minority population density, propensity for military enlistment, and proximity to CG units in order to improve recruiting efficiency and results. Similarly, office staffing should be based on these same variables. Relocation will also provide for more appropriate quota assignment to recruiting offices by tying quota allocations to objective recruiter productivity standards.

1.b.2. CG Recruiting Center (CGRC) Organization: Sectors leaders, supervisors, and support personnel should be located in their geographic sectors instead of CGRC. Lack of direct observation, travel limitations, and time zone differences hinder effective leadership under the current structure. leaders, supervisors, and support personnel could be collocated with CG District offices, activities, groups, etc., to provide additional benefits such as easy access to PERSRU's, clinics, and exchanges.

1.b.3. Organizational Control: The current recruiter measure of success is based on numbers of applicants shipped to Recruit Training. This conflicts with TRACEN Cape May's accountability for numbers of Recruit Training graduates. The current organizational structure (e.g., separate Flag Officers for Recruiting and Recruit Training) exacerbates this problem. Consistent with practices of other Services, both CGRC and Cape May should be accountable to the same Flag Officer for the same results (numbers graduating Recruit Training) to place the emphasis on the common goal of producing nonrates ready for service in the Coast Guard.

1.c. Recruiting Support/Tools

1.c.1. Recruiting Database: Information concerning recruiter and marketing effectiveness is lacking. A database should be developed to track recruiter productivity, return on investment for marketing, etc. to provide for appropriate improvements based upon objective data.

1.c.2. Leverage Technology to increase recruiter effectiveness. Recruiters are currently tied to ineffective "storefront" operations rather than being fully enabled to go where the prospects are. Moreover, in view of the importance of setting realistic expectations (discussed in 1.a.1. above), recruiters need ready access to relevant information whenever and wherever needed. Recommendations include:

1.c.2.a) Maximize recruiter mobility by creating a "virtual office" through use of

cell phones, laptops/modem, etc.

1.c.2.b) Develop a Recruiter Electronic Performance Support System (EPSS) to simplify and streamline the recruiting process while meeting the needs of both the recruiter and the prospect. The EPSS would contain required forms that could be processed on the spot or back at the office enabling recruiters to capture prospect information quickly and professionally. The EPSS would also provide information, pictures and video that can be tailored to the prospect's wants and needs. It would further provide a virtual roadmap for areas of special interest to the prospect (i.e., benefits, jobs, career opportunities, etc.). For example, if a prospect is attracted to the CG due to an interest in flying, the EPSS could lead the prospect through a self-paced tour highlighting aviation job/rating information, required ASVAB scores, career path, CG air frames, geographic assignment information, etc. The technology and software needed to produce this EPSS is 1.c.2.b) (cont'd)

readily available and the use of an electronic "job picture" is an area of much emphasis and innovation among other Services.

1.d. Marketing Programs and Incentives

1.d.1. Align Marketing Programs: Local marketing practices are not aligned with national marketing efforts. All efforts should support one vision; therefore, a standard format and approval process for local marketing plans is required. Marketing products should be geared toward local target populations.

1.d.2. Guaranteed A-School Program should be significantly expanded to allow for earliest possible rating selection/assignment. Currently, CG is alone among Armed Forces in requiring a nonrate tour before career path decision/A-school. NWSS analysis did not find that nonrates benefit from delayed rating affiliation. In addition, evidence suggests that it is a corporate myth that nonrates make pure, unbiased career-choice decisions by being exposed to various ratings during the first tour. To the contrary, the rating choice is unduly influenced by the supervisor, a desire to minimize sea duty, etc. Moreover, current practice discounts aptitudes, long-term career decision-making, and inhibits matching entry-level people to forecasted ratings needs. Associated possibilities are:

1.d.2.a) General guaranteed A-school recruitment with 6-year contracts.

1.d.2.b) Establishment of a smaller "unaffiliated" nonrate pool, similar to that of the Navy, composed of those who will serve in what we consider our traditional nonrate first-tour assignments under a 4-year contract. This pool is to fill required nonrate assignments and is for those who do not make a career choice, are unable to qualify for a desired rating, or are otherwise unable to get a slot in a rating of choice.

1.d.2.c) Establishing a core-and-strand approach in Recruit Training, similar to that of the Navy, that branches into separate tracks for A-school-bound recruits and those that are "unaffiliated" after a common indoctrination period.

1.d.3. Involve All of Team Coast Guard in Recruiting: Institute an "Every-Coastie-is-

a-Recruiter” program. Emphasize that recruiting is everyone’s responsibility, not the job of a few specialists. In conjunction:

1.d.3.a) Permissive Orders: Allow units to provide 1-day permissive orders to members on leave for recruiting purposes (e.g., visits to high schools, civic groups, etc.).

1.d.3.b) Awards: Authorize Director of CG Recruiting to award the COMDT LOC for voluntary recruiting efforts of members.

1.d.3.c) Available Materials: Have standard pre-prepared package of recruiting materials available to participants.

1.d.3.d) Ensure feedback/evaluation system to gauge ROI for this program.

1.d.3.e) Field unit assistance to recruiters should be formally established as a vital Service mission.

1.d.4. Strengthen ties between G-CP (Public Affairs) and CGRC. Establish PA billets in recruiting offices to improve professionalism of marketing/communications in recruiting operations.

1.e. Removing Barriers

1.e.1. Better management of applicants in a “caretaker” status could significantly reduce pre-shipping attrition. Shortening or eliminating this period or making changes to effectively prepare applicants for Recruit Training will result in greater retention of qualified applicants thereby improving recruiter throughput. Both of these options should be further explored in follow-up analysis.

1.e.2. Review and Validate Medical Standards: Medical Standards are inconsistently applied at pre-enlistment MEPS screening and post-enlistment Recruit Training screening; this results in costly, otherwise avoidable attrition after arrival at Recruit Training. Presently, the CG spends \$1M/yr for MEPS screening for which the CG may not be getting full value. Standard, consistently applied medical criteria should be based on a complete review of the Coast Guard’s needs.